

Good Afternoon

Thank you for joining me again today.

Yesterday I spoke about the dramatic economic impact that the occupation of the Ambassador Bridge is having on our local, regional and national supply chains.

I'm joined today by:

- Flavio Volpe, President, Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association (APMA)
- Brian Kingston, President and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association
- Rakesh Naidu, President & CEO, Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce

These are individuals who represent in total, tens of thousands of Canadians employed in industries that are directly impacted by the ongoing blockade.

As I said yesterday, we live in a thriving democracy, where the right to peaceful protest is protected and valued.

However, the Ambassador Bridge represents a full one THIRD of the trade between Canada and the United States and the ongoing occupation is having a profound impact on the economic wellbeing of both Canadian and American businesses.

Earlier today, Windsor City Council met and has authorized that an injunction be sought for the Superior Court of Justice to bring about an end to this illegal occupation.

In legal terms, the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association and Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association will be the main applicants, with the City of Windsor and Chamber of Commerce as supportive interveners.

The individuals on site are trespassing on municipal roads and if need be, will be removed to allow for the safe and efficient movement of goods across the border.

Yesterday I stood at this podium and spoke to the importance of a peaceful resolution and I remain hopeful that goal can be achieved.

Additional resources are being deployed from the Ontario Provincial Police to help bring about a negotiated solution.

And I am grateful to the Province of Ontario for responding rapidly to the call for support we issued yesterday.

The economic harm that this occupation is having on international trade is not sustainable and must come to an end.

As you can expect, this news conference will serve as a clarion call to activists and protestors who may seek to reinforce the occupation to prevent the reopening of the Ambassador Bridge.

To those who are thinking about joining the protest, let me just say this: Stay Away.

We plan to be in front of a Judge of the Superior Court of Justice as soon as possible and I cannot predict the outcome of our requested injunction or the timeline for action.

However, in the days ahead, neither I nor the Windsor Police will be able to provide any further operational details to safeguard the security of all involved.

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Let me just say that, including the 2016 tornado, the 2016 and 2017 floods and the public health crisis of the past two years that the past two DAYS have been among the most difficult of my time as Mayor.

While I don't agree with the individuals occupying the Ambassador Bridge, I appreciate that they are our neighbours.

These are folks who have been so disturbed by the pandemic and impacted by the public health restrictions that they have been motivated to take such a dramatic step.

Be it here or on Parliament Hill or in Coutts Alberta, we need to appreciate that these demonstrators are Canadian citizens and they have a fundamental right to their views and opinions.

In the past week, watching the events unfold in Ottawa, I've tried to put myself into their shoes and understand the situation from their perspective.

Sadly, I'm no further ahead in figuring this out. But I do know that as a nation – we have a LOT of healing to do as a result of the pandemic.

It's time for that healing to begin.

And in Windsor that healing can only start once the Ambassador Bridge reopens to international traffic.

Finally, I want to thank Flavio Volpe and Brian Kingston for having the courage to start this legal process to bring about an end of the current situation.